

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) An optical element consisting of:
a transparent insulating substrate;
a circuitry layer on the insulating substrate, said circuitry layer including an active polysilicon layer; and
5 an opaque optical shielding layer disposed to lie between the insulating substrate layer and the ~~circuitry layer~~ active polysilicon layer; wherein the optical element is part of a liquid crystal display and the opaque shielding layer also functions as a black matrix for said display.

Claim 2 (canceled).

3. (original) The optical element of claim 1 wherein the shielding layer comprises a material that is unaffected by exposure to temperatures up to 1,100°C.

Claims 4-23 (canceled).

24. (new) The optical element of claim 1, wherein the optical shielding layer is comprised of a light reflective material.

25. (new) The optical element of claim 1, wherein the optical shielding layer is comprised of a light absorbing material.

26. (new) The optical element of claim 1, wherein the optical shielding layer is comprised of one of silicon nitride, layers of silicon oxide and silicon nitride, and a refractory metal encapsulated in a suitable barrier layer.

27. (new) The optical element of claim 26, wherein the refractory metal comprises one of tungsten, cobalt, and titanium.

28. (new) The optical element of claim 26, wherein the barrier layer comprises one of tungsten silicide, tungsten nitride, and titanium nitride.

29. (new) The optical element of claim 26, further comprising a cap over said barrier layer.

30. (new) The optical element of claim 26, wherein the cap comprises one of silicon oxide, silicon nitride, and silicon oxynitride.

31. (new) The optical element of claim 26, further comprising an adhesive layer disposed between the refractory metal and the transparent insulating substrate.

32. (new) The optical element of claim 31, wherein the adhesive is comprised of a titanium/titanium nitride laminate.